an>

Title: Need to make Calicut airport in Kerala fully operational.

SHRI M.K. RAGHAVAN (KOZHIKODE): Thank you Madam for giving me this opportunity. I would like to raise an important issue with regard to Kozhikode International Airport.

Madam, Kozhikode International Airport is the fourth largest revenue earning airport in the country. Almost 98 per cent of the flight operations are to the GCC countries and it caters to about 2.5 to 3 million passengers annually. It is also one of the largest airports catering to the Holy Haj pilgrimage.

The airport has remained partially closed for the last over one-and-a-half year resulting in shifting flights to Kochi which also included wide bodied aircrafts. Airports like Dubai International Airport take only three to four months for re-carpeting and restructuring work whereas small airports like the Calicut is taking abnormally longer period. With this over delayed action, Calicut airport is deprived of much connectivity as airlines are withdrawing their operations from Calicut.

Madam, the hon. Minister of Civil Aviation has assured to convene a meeting on the progress and status of the Calicut Airport when a group of MPs from Kerala called on him. Unfortunately, this has not taken place so far.

In addition to this, the exorbitant seasonal increase in air fare is a great concern in general and particularly to the people of Kerala. A large number of blue collared Keralaites working in the Gulf sector have to pay heavily, sometime as much as Rs.40,000 for their one way ticket to India during vacation or festival seasons. The Government should intervene to normalize the price of air tickets. This should not be market driven but should be moderate and stabilized fare. It is these people who bring in foreign exchange and help both the Centre and the States in various developmental activities.

I, therefore, urge upon the hon. Minister to immediately convene a meeting of the MPs from Malabar region of Kerala along with the respective stake holders to discuss these pressing issues. Madam, I would like to request you to please advise the concerned Minister to convey a meeting.

HON. SPEAKER: S/Shri

E.T. Mohammad Basheer,

P.K. Biju,

Bhairon Prasad Mishra,

Adv. Joice George and

Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri M.K. Raghavan.

देखिए, मैं जीरो ऑवर में एक या दो मिनट से ज्यादा नहीं दूंगी। आपको जीरो ऑवर में पूरा का पूरा पन्ना नहीं पढ़ना है, especially you people. I will allow you to speak only for one or two minutes.